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| 10/717,730 | 11/20/2003 | Daniel N. Cripe | 200313587-1 | 8712 |

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HEWLETT PACKARD COMPANY
P O BOX 272400, 3404 E. HARMONY ROAD
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION
FORT COLLINS, CO 80527-2400

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| EXAMINER |
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SINKANTARAKORN, PAWARIS

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| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|

2416

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| NOTIFICATION DATE | DELIVERY MODE |
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01/15/2009

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

JERRY.SHORMA@HP.COM
mkraft@hp.com
ipa.mail@hp.com

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/717,730 | Applicant(s) CRIPE ET AL. | |
| | Examiner PAO SINKANTARAKORN | Art Unit 2416 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Prosecution Reopened

1. In view of the Appeal Brief filed on 10/06/2008, PROSECUTION IS HEREBY REOPENED. New grounds of rejections are set forth below.

To avoid abandonment of the application, appellant must exercise one of the following two options:

(1) file a reply under 37 CFR 1.111 (if this Office action is non-final) or a reply under 37 CFR 1.113 (if this Office action is final); or,

(2) initiate a new appeal by filing a notice of appeal under 37 CFR 41.31 followed by an appeal brief under 37 CFR 41.37. The previously paid notice of appeal fee and appeal brief fee can be applied to the new appeal. If, however, the appeal fees set forth in 37 CFR 41.20 have been increased since they were previously paid, then appellant must pay the difference between the increased fees and the amount previously paid.

A Supervisory Patent Examiner (SPE) has approved of reopening prosecution by signing below:

/Ricky Ngo/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2416.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein

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were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

3. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 1-4 and 6-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Congdon et al. (US 6,151,297) in view of Burns (US 6,938,092).

Regarding claim 1, Congdon et al. disclose a computer system comprising:

a central processing unit (CPU) (see column 6 line 15, Network Operating System runs on a CPU);

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a first and second network adapter teamed together and configured to receive offloaded connections (see column 8 lines 57-64, when multiple NICs in a server are attached to a network and the NICs are using the same MAC address, it is possible to receive packets on many ports) ; and

wherein a program executing on the CPU reloads an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter if one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection was received on the second network adapter (see column 8 lines 1-5, 12-14, and 26-39, the NICs are active on the network at the same time and the invention supports a fault tolerance feature; fault tolerance enables a system to continue operating properly in the event of the failure of some of its components. The switch selects one of the multiple NICs using the fault tolerance feature when one of the NICs fails so that there is no need to reestablish a new connection).

Congdon et al. merely disclose fault tolerance. However, Burns, from the same or similar fields of endeavor, discloses a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on the second network adapter (see column 6 line 36 – column 7 line 29 and column 7 lines 57-67, Port 2 becomes a primary port, which is responsible for receiving data when Port 1 fails; as a result of Port 2 being a primary port, which is being used to receive data, the port aggregation driver updates the TCB for TCP connection #1 by changing MAC C to MAC A, where the port aggregation driver is of network access

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layer (see Figure 2 reference numeral 115); Once the MAC addresses are swapped, the packets originally destined to port 1 are received at port 2, which now has MAC A as its address; as a result of the swap of the MAC addresses, port aggregation driver calls a NDIS request function to update the handle and pointer of the change and hence reloads an offloaded connection).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on the second network adapter of Burns into the switch of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on the second network adapter is that it increases the efficiency of the switch by implementing fault recovery feature into the switch.

Regarding claims 2 and 17, the first and second network adapters are capable of fully offloading all protocol processing (see column 8 lines 9-14, if one of the NICs fails, there is no need to reestablish a new connection; therefore, the NICs are fully capable of offloading all protocol processing);

regarding claims 3 and 18, the first and second network adapters transmit and receive packets of data using a single media access control (MAC) and internet protocol (IP) address (see column 8 lines 1-5).

Regarding claim 4, Congdon et al. fail to teach the system, wherein the program reloads an offloaded connection by transferring the context of the connection from the first network adapter to the second network adapter. However, Burns from the same or similar fields of endeavor discloses a method of the program reloads an offloaded connection by transferring the context of the connection from the first network adapter to the second network adapter (see column 6 lines 36-67 and column 7 lines 57-67, the port aggregation driver updates the TCB for TCP connection #1 by changing MAC C to MAC A).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement a method of the program reloads an offloaded connection by transferring the context of the connection from the first network adapter to the second network adapter of Burns into the switch of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing a method of the program reloads an offloaded connection by transferring the context of the connection from the first network adapter to the second network adapter is that it increases the efficiency of the switch.

Regarding claims 6 and 21, Congdon et al. fail to teach the system, wherein the first and second network adapters send a notification to the program if a connection is prematurely terminated. However, Burns from the same or similar fields of endeavor discloses a method for send a notification to the program if a connection is prematurely terminated (see column 6 lines 36-45, sending flush status to the port aggregation driver).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement a method for send a notification to the program if a connection is prematurely terminated of Burns into the switch of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing a method for send a notification to the program if a connection is prematurely terminated is that it increases the efficiency of the switch.

Regarding claim 7, Congdon et al. disclose a system, wherein the first and second network adapters comprise network interface cards (NICs) (see column 6 line 2).

Regarding claims 8, 12, and 16, Congdon et al. disclose a method comprising:
examining a packet received from an external device (see column 7 lines 38-42);
determining whether a connection associated with the packet is currently offloaded (see column 8 lines 26-39, fault tolerance feature determines whether there is any fail NIC in the server, therefore, determines whether a connection associated with the packet is currently transmitted);

reloading the connection if the packet associated with the connection is offloaded and received by a network interface not currently processing the offloaded connection (see column 8 lines 1-5, 12-14, and 26-39, the NICs are active on the network at the same time and the invention supports a fault tolerance feature; fault tolerance enables a system to continue operating properly in the event of the failure of some of its components. The switch selects one of the multiple NICs using the fault tolerance feature when one of the NICs fails so that there is no need to reestablish a new connection).

Congdon et al. merely disclose fault tolerance. However, Burns from the same or similar fields of endeavor discloses a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on the second network adapter (see column 6 line 36 – column 7 line 29 and column 7 lines 57-67, Port 2 becomes a primary port, which is responsible for receiving data when Port 1 fails; as a result of Port 2 being a primary port, which is being used to receive data, the port aggregation driver updates the TCB for TCP connection #1 by changing MAC C to MAC A, where the port aggregation driver is of network access layer (see Figure 2 reference numeral 115); Once the MAC addresses are swapped, the packets originally destined to port 1 are received at port 2, which now has MAC A as its address; as a result of the swap of the MAC addresses, port aggregation driver calls a NDIS request function to update the handle and pointer of the change and hence reloads an offloaded connection).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on the second network adapter of Burns into the switch of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing a method of reloading an offloaded connection established by the first network adapter onto the second network adapter as a result of one of a plurality of packets associated with the offloaded connection being received on

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the second network adapter is that it increases the efficiency of the switch by implementing fault recovery feature into the switch.

Regarding claims 9 and 13, Congdon et al. disclose a method further comprising determining an identifier for the network interface that receives the packet (see column 7 lines 38-44, the switch determines the output port by looking up the Destination Address in the address table) and writing the determined identifier to a memory (see column 7 address table).

Regarding claims 10, 14, and 19, Congdon et al. fail to teach the method, wherein the reloading further comprising copying the context of the connection to the network interface that received the packet. However, Burns from the same or similar fields of endeavor discloses the method, wherein the reloading further comprising copying the context of the connection to the network interface that received the packet (see column 6 lines 36-67 and column 7 lines 57-67, the port aggregation driver updates the TCB for TCP connection #1 by changing MAC C to MAC A).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to implement the method, wherein the reloading further comprising copying the context of the connection to the network interface that received the packet of Burns into the switch of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing the method, wherein the reloading further comprising copying the context of the connection to the network interface that received the packet is that it increases the efficiency of the switch.

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Regarding claims 11 and 15, Congdon et al. disclose a method, wherein the network interface that received the packet and the network interface currently offloading the connection are teamed together (see column 6 lines 13-17, the group of NICs appear as a single NIC to the clients in the network);

regarding claim 20, the program monitors all data received by the first and second means for sending and receiving data connections (see column 7 lines 38-44, the switch determines the output port by looking up the Destination Address in the address table).

6 Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Congdon et al. in view of Burns as applied to claims and 1 and 16 above, and further in view of Mahalingham et al. (US 6,314,525).

Regarding claim 5, Congdon et al. in view of Siu et al. disclose all the subject matter of the claimed invention except the system/method, wherein the program inactivates connections associated with packets that have not been received for a defined time period.

However, the invention of Mahalingham et al. from the same or similar fields of endeavor disclose a method/system for deactivating a network adapter when the network adapter fails to respond after a predetermined time period (see column 9 lines 46-56).

Thus, it would have been obvious to the person of ordinary skill in the art to implement a method/system for deactivating a network adapter when the network

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adapter fails to respond after a predetermined time period as taught by Mahalingham into the data processing method of Congdon et al.

The motivation for implementing the method/system for deactivating a network adapter when the network adapter fails to respond after a predetermined time period is that it increases efficiency of the NICs in the server.

Conclusion

6. **Examiner's Note:** Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

In the case of amending the claimed invention, Applicant is respectfully requested to indicate the portion(s) of the specification which dictate(s) the structure relied on for proper interpretation and also to verify and ascertain the metes and bounds of the claimed invention.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to PAO SINKANTARAKORN whose telephone number is

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(571)270-1424. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 9:00am-3:00pm EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky Ngo can be reached on 571-272-3139. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Pao Sinkantarakorn/
Examiner, Art Unit 2416

/Ricky Ngo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art
Unit 2416

PS